

100201138-2

10/759,628

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the non-final Official Action mailed July 15, 2005. Reconsideration of the application in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-31 and 41-44 were cancelled previously. No claims are added or cancelled by this paper. Thus, claims 32-40 and 45-49 are currently pending for the further action.

Allowed Claims:

In the most recent Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 32-36. Dependent claims 38 and 47 were further indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the allowance of these claims and this finding of allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, claims 38 and 47 have each been amended herein and rewritten as independent claims. Therefore, based on the Examiner's finding of allowable subject matter, following entry of this amendment, claims 38, 39 and 47 should be in condition for immediate allowance.

Prior Art:

With regard to the prior art, the outstanding Office Action rejected claims 37, 40, 45, 46, 48 and 49 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of the combined teachings of U.S. Patent No. 5,106,313 to Lwee et al. ("Lwee") and U.S. Patent No. 5,242,311 to Seong ("Seong"). For at least the following reasons, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

100201138-2

10/759,628

Claim 37 recites:

A protective cover for a pin connector of a backplane, said cover comprising:  
at least one connector having receptacles for receiving pins of a pin connector of a backplane, wherein said receptacles are not electrically connected to a circuit board or circuit elements;  
a handle extending from said at least one connector for installing or removing said protective cover; and  
clips extending from said cover for clipping said cover to said pin connector of a backplane.

In contrast, the combination of Lwee and Seong fails to teach or suggest the claimed clips for clipping the cover to the pin connector of a backplane. The combination further fails to teach or suggest the claimed handle for installing or removing the protective cover. Additionally, the teachings of Lwee and Seong would not have been combined as proposed in the Office Action to provide the receptacles of Seong in the cover taught by Lwee. Each of these points will be described in detail below.

The combination of Lwee and Seong fails to teach or suggest the claimed clips for clipping the cover to the pin connector of a backplane. According to the Office Action, the claimed clips are taught by Lwee "on each side [of the cover], see Fig. 3." (Action of 7/15/05, p. 2). However, as is made clear by Fig. 4 and the ghost of Fig. 3 in Lwee, these extensions, to which the Action refers, slip inside the header (20) and consequently are not clips that "clip said cover to said pin connector of a backplane" as claimed. More importantly, Lwee does not ever teach or suggest that the extensions noted by the Office Action have any function whatsoever in securing the cover (50) to the header (20). There is no support in Lwee for the position in the Office Action that the extensions shown in Figs. 3 and 4 are, or function as, clips. Consequently, the combination of Lwee and Seong fails to teach or suggest the claimed clips for clipping the cover to the pin connector of a backplane.

100201138-2

10/759,628

With regard to the handle for installing or removing the protective cover, the Office Action refers to element (52) shown in Figs. 3 and 4 of Lwee. (*Id.*). However, there is no support in the Lwee reference for considering this element a handle that is used to install or remove the cover (50) as claimed. To the contrary, Lwee describes element (52) as having a different function. As explained in Lwee, a "supporting tab 52 can be formed on the outer side of the cover 50. As shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, the supporting tab 52 is placed in contact with an auxiliary printed circuit board 43 as an extension of the printed circuit board 40 and stably supports the header device 10 on the printed circuit board 40 *so as to prevent tilting of the header device 10 during a soldering process.*" (Lwee, col. 4, lines 1-8) (emphasis added). Lwee does not teach or suggest that supporting tab (52) is, or could be used as, the claimed handle. Consequently, the Office Action appears to be reading teachings into Lwee that are not actually there.

"To establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974)." M.P.E.P. § 2143.03. Accord. M.P.E.P. § 706.02(j). Consequently, because the combination of Lwee and Seong fails to teach either the handle or clips recited in claim 37, the rejection of claim 37 and its dependent claims should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Independent claim 45 recites:

A protective cover for a pin connector of a backplane, said cover comprising:  
*at least one connector having receptacles for receiving pins of a pin connector of a backplane*, wherein said receptacles are not electrically connected to a circuit board or circuit elements; and  
a planar member extending from said at least one connector.  
(emphasis added).

100201138-2

10/759,628

As noted above, independent claim 37 similarly recites a protective cover comprising receptacles for pins of a pint connector.

Applicant takes the position that the combination of Lwee and Seong would not have suggested the claimed receptacles in a protective cover to one of ordinary skill in the art. Lwee does not teach or suggest receptacles in the cover (50) for receiving the pins of a pin connector as claimed. The Office Action concedes this fact, and consequently proposes to combine the teachings of Lwee with those of Seong on this point. Seong teaches a cover (16) that engages the pins of a connector in receptacles so that the connector or header can be positioned on a circuit board during manufacturing.

The cover taught by Lwee is not used to position the header, but to protect the header during wave soldering. During "the wave soldering process employed for fully automated soldering process, the cover 50 can be used in which case neither a molten solder nor flux enters the housing to positively prevent a pin contamination." (Lwee, col. 3, lines 32-36). Consequently, adding receptacles to the Lwee cover (50) serves no purpose. The Lwee cover is able to perform its intended function without individual pin receptacles.

"The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. In re Mills, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1420 (Fed. Cir. 1990)." M.P.E.P. § 2143.01. In this case, there is no motivation or desirability suggested in the prior art for adding the receptacles of Seong to the cover of Lwee as proposed in the Office Action. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claims 37 and 45, and their respective dependent claims, should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

100201138-2

10/759,628

Additionally, claim 46 recites that "said planar member is sufficiently sized to divide and separate blades installed on said backplane in a rack of a blade server." According to the Office Action, the claimed planar member is equivalent to the supporting tab (52) taught by Lwee. (Action of 7/15/05, p. 3).

The actual function of the supporting tab (52) has been described above. The tab (52) does not and could not serve to divide and separate blades installed in a rack and connected to the backplane of a blade server as claimed. Moreover, the header taught by Lwee is merely an edge connector. (See Lwee, Fig. 3). Consequently, the header taught by Lwee is not, and could not be, a pin connector of a backplane in a blade server. Consequently, the Lwee cover (50) would never be interposed between adjacent blades in a blade server as claimed.

Thus, the combination of Lwee and Seong, as proposed by the recent Office Action, fails to teach or suggest the planar member of claim 46 sufficient to divide and separate blades in a blade server as claimed. For at least these additional reasons, the rejection of claim 46 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

100201138-2

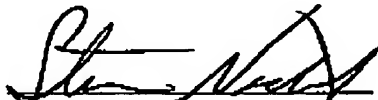
10/759,628

Conclusion:

For the foregoing reasons, the present application is thought to be clearly in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of the application in light of these remarks is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions which could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

DATE: 13 October 2005

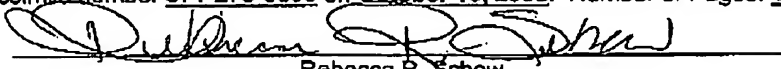
  
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